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SUBJECT: NORWEGIANS MUSE ON CGPCS AND ASPIRANT COUNTRIES
REF: STATE 66632

Classified By: Political Counselor Kristen Bauer for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

11. (C) SUMMARY: In a wide ranging discussion, Norway's representative to the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS), Carl Salicath, expressed reticence about admitting flag-of-convenience states to membership. He also discussed Cyprus's membership, Egypt's "odd" behavior with regard to the CGPCS, Working Group Four dead ends, chair rotation, and the good leadership demonstrated by the US. End summary.

NORWAY NOT SURE ABOUT ADMITTING FLAG-OF-CONVENIENCE STATES

12. (C) In response to reftel demarche, Salicath was visibly unsure about how to proceed, and said he would have to "check with other people in the ministry" about whether Norway would agree to membership by Liberia and Panama. He also expressed curiosity about why other flag-of-convenience countries like the Bahamas were not on the list. He said his comments were preliminary, but he questioned the wisdom of giving such countries any say on issues regarding norms and best practices that the CGPCS might develop. He pointed out that, as it is, these countries have observer status and can comment at meetings.

13. (C) As for our proposed mechanism on invitation to CGPCS aspirants by the chairs, Salicath emphasized that, if it is true that governments will have the option to not invite certain participants, the chair must very clearly circulate its invitation intentions to all current members ahead of time, so that there is real transparency among members and governments really do have the opportunity to consult and oppose membership if desired.

NORWAY DOES SUPPORT CYPRUS'S MEMBERSHIP

14. (C) In Salicath's opinion, beyond the Turkey/Greece issue, Cyprus is important to the piracy issue largely because a Norwegian shipping magnate owns Frontline, a huge shipping company headquartered there. Norway supports the admission of Cyprus to membership in the CGPCS.

OBSERVATIONS ON EGYPT

15. (C) Salicath said that Egypt is an "essential partner" in the fight against piracy but "they should not be given very much responsibility." He characterized Egyptian behavior, at various times, as "dogmatic," "disorganized," "paranoid," and "sometimes contrary to their own interests." Beyond organizational oddities, which led to the Working Group 4 meeting breaking down in chaos when the Egyptians attempted to broaden the subject to capacity building, Salicath noted a general tendency for Egypt to be worried about "too much" cooperation on this issue, and also noted their understandable but counterproductive protectiveness of the

Red Sea as their turf. He speculated that more and more piracy might migrate there, as the Egyptians are at this time unable or unwilling to effectively police it.

WORKING GROUP FOUR DEAD END?

16. (C) Salicath expressed some disappointment that Working Group four (where he was a representative) will not meet again, as it appears to him that it has failed to achieve any concrete objective. He noted positively the way the US had prenegotiated a document with the Egyptians addressing the communication strategy with the Somalian people concerning piracy, but said that a conversation with the Egyptians in early June indicated that the strategy was likely never to be implemented, due to funding concerns--UNPOS requires \$500,000 to implement it.

CHAIR ROTATION

17. (C) Salicath said that he very much appreciated the US's role in organizing and leading the CGPCS, and said that the sessions we chaired were productive. However, he suggested that if the chair is supposed to rotate, then it should rotate, and he questioned why we chaired the third meeting (after chairing the first) rather than have another partner participate.

JOHNSON